

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO
EASTERN DIVISION**

NICOLE CHLOPECKI,

Plaintiff,

v.

TICKETING OFFICER, *et al.*,

Defendant.

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CASE NO. 1:18 CV 2357

JUDGE CHRISTOPHER A. BOYKO

OPINION AND ORDER

CHRISTOPHER A. BOYKO, J.:

Pro se Plaintiff Nicole Chlopecki filed this action against “Ticketing Officer,” the State of Ohio and the City of Willowick. In the Complaint, Plaintiff alleges she was ticketed for loitering at several businesses in a plaza in Willowick in 2017. She contends she had permission to be at those businesses to wait for transportation and use their Wi-Fi. She asks this Court to dismiss the charges against her.

Plaintiff also filed a Motion to Proceed *In Forma Pauperis* (Doc. No. 2). That Motion is granted.

I. BACKGROUND

The Complaint does not contain much information. Plaintiff states she received three tickets for loitering at a shopping plaza in Willowick, Ohio in 2017. She states she has permission to be at the plaza due to anxiety and medical issues. She further alleges the Verizon

store allows her to use their Wi-Fi for emergency situations that arise when friends or family are delayed in picking her up. She states the RTA does not stop and has a changing schedule that has caused problems for her and other passengers. She requests all tickets be dismissed and the charge of contempt be renamed because she was in the emergency room with her medication constantly changing.

Plaintiff lists three case numbers in the Willoughby Municipal Court that are associated with loitering tickets. Each of these mention a contempt charge for failing to appear in court. Two of the tickets were dismissed by the prosecutor prior to trial on October 11, 2017. Plaintiff pled guilty to the third ticket and the court imposed a \$25.00 fine and court costs. That plea also occurred on October 11, 2017.

II. LAW AND ANALYSIS

Although *pro se* pleadings are liberally construed, *Boag v. MacDougall*, 454 U.S. 364, 365 (1982) (per curiam); *Haines v. Kerner*, 404 U.S. 519, 520 (1972), the Court is required to dismiss an *in forma pauperis* action under 28 U.S.C. §1915(e) if it fails to state a claim upon which relief can be granted, or if it lacks an arguable basis in law or fact. *Neitzke v. Williams*, 490 U.S. 319 (1989); *Lawler v. Marshall*, 898 F.2d 1196 (6th Cir. 1990); *Sistrunk v. City of Strongsville*, 99 F.3d 194, 197 (6th Cir. 1996). An action has no arguable basis in law when the Defendant is immune from suit or when the Plaintiff claims a violation of a legal interest which clearly does not exist. *Neitzke*, 490 U.S. at 327. An action has no arguable factual basis when the allegations are delusional or rise to the level of the irrational or “wholly incredible.” *Denton v. Hernandez*, 504 U.S. 25, 32 (1992); *Lawler*, 898 F.2d at 1199.

A cause of action fails to state a claim upon which relief may be granted when it lacks

“plausibility in the Complaint.” *Bell Atl. Corp. v. Twombly*, 550 U.S. 544, 564 (2007). A pleading must contain a “short and plain statement of the claim showing that the pleader is entitled to relief.” *Ashcroft v. Iqbal*, 556 U.S. 662, 677-78 (2009). The factual allegations in the pleading must be sufficient to raise the right to relief above the speculative level on the assumption that all the allegations in the Complaint are true. *Bell Atl. Corp.*, 550 U.S. at 555. The Plaintiff is not required to include detailed factual allegations, but must provide more than “an unadorned, the-defendant-unlawfully-harmed-me accusation.” *Iqbal*, 556 U.S. at 678. A pleading that offers legal conclusions or a simple recitation of the elements of a cause of action will not meet this pleading standard. *Id.* In reviewing a Complaint, the Court must construe the pleading in the light most favorable to the Plaintiff. *Bibbo v. Dean Witter Reynolds, Inc.*, 151 F.3d 559, 561 (6th Cir. 1998).

Plaintiff has not established a basis for federal court jurisdiction. Federal courts are courts of limited jurisdiction and, unlike state trial courts, they do not have general jurisdiction to review all questions of law. *See Ohio ex rel. Skaggs v. Brunner*, 549 F.3d 468, 474 (6th Cir. 2008). Instead, they have only the authority to decide cases that the Constitution and Congress have empowered them to resolve. *Id.* Generally, the Constitution and Congress have given federal courts authority to hear a case only when diversity of citizenship exists between the parties, or when the case raises a federal question. *Caterpillar Inc. v. Williams*, 482 U.S. 386, 392 (1987). The first type of federal jurisdiction, diversity of citizenship, is applicable to cases of sufficient value between “citizens of different states.” 28 U.S.C. § 1332(a)(1). To establish diversity of citizenship, the Plaintiff must establish that she is a citizen of one state and all of the Defendants are citizens of other states. *Von Dunser v. Aronoff*, 915 F.2d 1071, 1072 (6th

Cir.1990). The second type of federal jurisdiction relies on the presence of a federal question. This type of jurisdiction arises where a “well-pleaded complaint establishes either that federal law creates the cause of action or that the Plaintiff’s right to relief necessarily depends on resolution of a substantial question of federal law.” *Franchise Tax Bd. v. Construction Laborers Vacation Trust*, 463 U.S. 1, 27–28 (1983).

Diversity of citizenship does not exist in this case. Plaintiff lists a Willowick, Ohio as her address. All of the Defendants also appear to be citizens of Ohio.

If federal jurisdiction exists in this case, it must be based on a claimed violation of federal law. Plaintiff is proceeding *pro se* and *pro se* Plaintiffs enjoy the benefit of a liberal construction of their pleadings and filings. *Boswell v. Mayer*, 169 F.3d 384, 387 (6th Cir. 1999). Even with that liberal construction, however, Plaintiff failed to identify a federal cause of action in this case and none is apparent on the face of the Complaint.

III. CONCLUSION

Accordingly, Plaintiff’s Motion to Proceed *In Forma Pauperis* (Doc. No. 2) is granted, and this action is dismissed pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1915(e). The Court certifies, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a)(3), that an appeal from this decision could not be taken in good faith.¹

IT IS SO ORDERED.

DATED: February 14, 2019

s/ Christopher A. Boyko
CHRISTOPHER A. BOYKO
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

¹ 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a)(3) provides:

An appeal may not be taken *in forma pauperis* if the trial court certifies that it is not taken in good faith.